



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Serving the community in greater Western Sydney

Macquarie Legal Centre (MLC)

Level 3, Suite 302, 107 Phillip Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

PO Box 23
Parramatta NSW 2124
wsclcparra@clc.net.au

T: (02) 8833 0911
(02) 8833 0920
F: (02) 8833 0900

www.wsclc.org.au

MLC acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, the Darug people, and pays respect to their elders, past and present.

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Attorney-General's Department

New South Wales
Department of Family and Community Services (FACS)
NSW Fair Trading
Legal Aid Commission NSW

Non-Government
Macquarie University
Western Sydney University (WSU)

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1. WHO WE ARE



The Macquarie Legal Centre team

Macquarie Legal Centre is an independent, non-profit, community organisation. We provide free legal advice, information, referrals, casework, minor assistance and community legal education to disadvantaged people across 132 suburbs of greater western and northern Sydney.

Our service delivery area includes local government areas with some of Australia's most disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially isolated people. Our clients include people on low incomes, people with health and ability concerns, Indigenous Australians, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, single parents and victims of domestic violence. We also service local government areas with the greatest ethnic diversity in NSW.

We are located in Parramatta, which has the largest justice precinct in Australia outside the Sydney and Melbourne CBDs. The precinct includes judicial, police, custodial and justice administration functions as well as professional services.

2. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Provide free legal and non-legal services to assist the community to achieve equality and justice, particularly disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially isolated members of the community.
- Promote educational programs that empower clients.
- Undertake research to identify the community needs to enhance service delivery.
- Enter into partnerships that enhance the legal centre and the clients we support.
- Support clients that do not use English as their principal language.
- Create awareness of the social issues facing the community and actively participate in creating positive change.
- Provide a safe and informative space where people are treated with respect and integrity, and have access to relevant services.



Macquarie Legal Centre staff

3. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



CHAIRPERSON PAULA CHEGWIDDEN

It has been a busy and challenging year for Macquarie Legal Centre (MLC). Perhaps the biggest change to our service came in May, when our Management Committee decided to amalgamate with Hawkesbury Nepean CLC and Mt Druitt and Area CLC to form Western Sydney Community Legal Centre (WSCLC). A successful vote of the membership followed in June. We are excited by the opportunities presented by the new, larger community legal centre, and look forward to seeing our work grow and reach even more people in our region via our additional offices and services.

Nevertheless, it is hard not to feel some sadness as MLC is no more. Our office operated for just short of 40 years and, in that time, grew into a significant and trusted legal service.

Funding continues to be a challenge within our sector. It was one of the drivers for our amalgamation, and we watch the coming year with some anxiety as a proposed 30 per cent funding cut to the community legal centre sector approaches.

MLC was always a strong advocate for the significant social and economic benefits of community legal centres, and we will continue to highlight these benefits as WSCLC. In particular, community legal centres like ours provide excellent value to the community – both to individual clients and to the public as a whole – through crime prevention, the delivery of government policy, and as a focus for the provision of *pro bono* and volunteer work by solicitors.

Despite the numerous challenges during the year, our staff continued to diligently run their programs and maintain a very high standard of service delivery, providing information, advice and support to people seeking our help. This was reflected in the numerous unsolicited letters of thanks we received from people who appreciated the professionalism of our service. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank all staff for their dedication to our clients and to the organisation. We are very fortunate to have staff who are passionate about their work, and derive satisfaction from helping the less fortunate in our community.

I would particularly like to thank everyone involved in the amalgamation process, which required a lot of work from staff and the Committee to ensure it would be successful. As the chair of MLC, I would also like to thank my fellow Committee members for their commitment and support.

The work of MLC continues as WSCLC, and we look forward to our organisation growing and developing in the coming years to serve the people of Western Sydney.

Paula Chegwidden, Chairperson

4. MANAGER'S REPORT



Manager Maria Girdler

I am very pleased to report the Legal Centre has had another successful year.

Unfortunately, I again need to report that we are facing funding cuts in the coming year, 2017. To us it is self-evident that our work makes a difference for the clients we assist, the broader community, and ultimately saves the government money.

In June 2016, Ms Julie Owens, Member for Parramatta, and The Hon Mark Dreyfus, QC, Shadow Attorney-General, visited our office and reiterated their support for our services to be funded adequately, and not be subject to cuts.

Some of the year's highlights have included increased funding for our domestic violence service. It is very encouraging to see domestic violence being a priority area for both federal and state programs.

During the year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of our Children's Court Assistance Scheme (CCAS). We were pleased that so many of our colleagues could join us for the celebration. Thanks to Deloitte for making their venue available free of charge.

Change of Principal Solicitor

In July 2015, John Rafferty, our Principal Solicitor since 2008, resigned. As the head of the practice, John made a significant contribution to the Centre and provided stable leadership in the practice. I welcome Michelle Ericoli and Helen Taranto to the role which they now job-share.

Amalgamation

Since September 2015 much of my time has been spent on a proposal to amalgamate with 2 neighbouring CLCs, Hawkesbury Nepean CLC and Mt Druitt and Area CLC. Each

Centre's Management Committee and members voted on the issue. On 1 June 2016, Macquarie's members voted to amalgamate and become part of the new entity, Western Sydney Community Legal Centre.

Thank yous

My work would not be possible without the ongoing hard work of the staff. A big thank you to all staff and volunteers. To our Management Committee and particularly to our Chairperson, Paula Chegwiddden, I say thank you for all the hours contributed to make the Centre a success.

This will be the last report for Macquarie Legal Centre- the next one will be with our new name and logo, Western Sydney Community Legal Centre.

5. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Paula Chegwidden
Chairperson
Meeting attendance:
9 out of 9



Len Kenny
Deputy chair
Meeting attendance:
8 out of 9



Debra Ronan
Secretary
Meeting attendance:
6 out of 9



Clare Babbage
Committee Member
Meeting attendance:
3 out of 4
(joined February 2016)



Lisa Godwin
Committee Member
Meeting attendance:
2 out of 4
(joined February 2016)



John Hargrave
Committee Member
Meeting attendance:
4 out of 5



Lisa McLoughlan
Committee Member
Meeting attendance:
5 out of 5



Sylvia Sant
Committee Member
Meeting attendance:
2 out of 2
(resigned September 2015)

Other Management Committee members:

- **Natalie Sawstchek**
Meeting attendance:
4 out of 4
(joined February 2016)
- **John Buscall**
Committee Member
Meeting attendance:
2 out of 3
(resigned October 2015)

6. VOLUNTEER STUDENTS & SOLICITORS

Our Centre would not be able to run without the efforts of our amazing volunteer students and solicitors. Their commitment to social justice and the aims of our Centre is incredible. The enthusiasm they show when they come into work is inspiring for us all. We are so fortunate to have them contribute their talents to MLC.

Volunteer Students

Kristy BAKIC
Stefanie CAR
Harshitha CHAMAKURI
Winnie CHU
Corinne DEALL
Celine EL-AZZI
Sonja GRNOVIC
Aimee HINDER
Fern HOANG
Victor HOANG
Stephanie KALMER
Heela KHATIZ
Mark LEE
Janet LI
Nathan MARES
Eleanor MAXTED
Emma MORRIS
Lauren NEWCOMBE
Vanessa OSIFO

Volunteer Students (cont)

Kin PAN
Timothy PATRICK
Mary-Ann PHAM
Catherine PIOTROWSKI
Clemance SEMAAN
Rohan SHUKLA
Elodie SOMERVILLE
Annika SOOD
Nicole STEIB
Osly TANG
Julianne TIGLAO
Eleanor TJONDRO
Kathy TRUONG
Eric VUU
Samuel WESTLEY
Denise WIREKO-BROBBY
Stephanie WOOD
Jeff XIAN

Volunteer Solicitors

Jessica ABI-KHATTER
Chris BAKER
Andrew BANNA
Jennifer CHOI
Keiran ELLIOT
Cathy-Anne GREW
Nikolai HADDAD
Samia HADDAD
Amanda HOWE
Carolyn MUNK
Keiran RIDLEY
Susan WAN
Nidah YOUSSEF

I have been a volunteer at the PCJC for over 12 months. I find the experience working with the disadvantaged members of our community priceless and educational. Not only does it give context to my studies, both the law and social science disciplines, but the ability to 'give back' to the community is rewarding.

– Emma Mansour, PCJC volunteer

7. GENERALIST LEGAL PRACTICE



Generalist solicitors Michelle Ericoli (left) and Helen Taranto (right)

Our Generalist Legal Practice provides legal advice, minor case assistance and casework for disadvantaged clients in various areas of family, civil and criminal law. Our team works towards empowering underprivileged people in our community to make them aware of their legal rights and allow them access to the justice system.

The team's work during the year included:

- Providing 477 face-to-face appointments with solicitors.
- Providing 836 telephone advices with solicitors.
- Conducting Community Legal Education sessions on care and protection; car accidents, insurance and debt; and family law and domestic violence, including sessions on travelling overseas and relocation after separation.
- Liaising with Legal Aid NSW, Mt Druitt and Area CLC and Hawkesbury-Nepean CLC to discuss amalgamation, with a view to redistributing services to the most disadvantaged areas.

Case study – car accident

Tomas, who is from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, was involved in a car accident. He was not at fault, but the other driver lodged a claim with their insurance company and claimed Tomas was responsible. The insurance company pursued him for the other driver's repair costs. However, they did not provide a copy of the repair invoice or the insured's version of events, despite numerous requests from our office.

The insurance company then referred the matter to a debt collection company, which sent letters to Tomas demanding payment. We contacted the debt collection company and informed them of our dealings with the insurance company, and again requested a copy of the repair invoice and the insured's version of events. The debt collection company referred the matter back to the insurance company.

We were then informed that, after further investigation by the insurance company, the insured's vehicle had been assessed almost a year after the accident occurred. The insurance company and debt collection company closed their file and no further action was taken.

* The names in this case study have been altered.

8. FAMILY RELATIONSHIP CENTRE LEGAL SERVICES



Family Relationship solicitors Samiha Alameddine (left) and Sarah Hart (right)

The Family Relationship Centre (FRC) program provides legal advice and assistance to separated families going through the mediation process at the Parramatta and Macquarie Park FRCs. The FRC solicitors often give family law advice to parents before mediation to help them to reach a suitable parenting arrangement which will be best for their children.

Our solicitors have had a very busy year. Work during the year included:

- Providing legal advice and education sessions to parents going through mediation
- Giving general family law advice to clients by telephone or face-to-face.
- Representing clients at lawyer-assisted mediations in more complex matters
- Running Family Law Student Education programs in partnership with Macquarie University. Here, students observed legal matters in the family courts, domestic violence matters in the Local Court, and, inter alia, attend at the Family Relationship Centres to learn about mediation. This gave them excellent practical experience for their degrees.
- Assisted clients with other family issues, for example in relation to mental health concerns, drugs issues, and supervised time with a parent.

Case study – Child custody

We represented a client, Mary, in a lawyer-assisted mediation at Parramatta Family Relationship Centre. Mary was spending very little time with her infant child, who was living with the father, Alex. Alex did not think it was appropriate for the child to spend any more time with Mary as she had mental health concerns. During mediation, we provided Alex with information from Mary's psychologist showing evidence of her wellness in order to put his concern about her mental health to rest. We also provided him with legal advice. The parties were able to come to an amicable agreement. Their child is now spending significant time with both parents.

*The names in this case study have been altered.

9. HOME BUILDING ADVOCACY SERVICE



HoBAS solicitor Hiranya Perera

The Home Building Advocacy Service (HoBAS) is a free state-wide legal advice service that helps home building consumers resolve disputes with their builders. Most advice is provided over the phone, empowering clients to run their matter at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). We also provide some face-to-face representation for clients at the NCAT. HoBAS is funded by the NSW Office of Fair Trading.

The growth in housing construction across the State created an abnormally hectic working year for HoBAS. We had a record level of 879 advices, which was an increase on the previous year. We contributed to policy and law reform by making submissions on proposed reforms to the Home Building Compensation Fund.

Our submissions were based on systemic issues noted in the course of providing advice to clients. In addition, we drafted the chapter on 'Home Building Consumers' for the 14th edition of *The Law Handbook*.

Work during the year also included:

- Conducting community legal education sessions to educate consumers of their rights and responsibilities with a view to reducing home building disputes and claims.
- Coordinating with NSW Fair Trading to have HoBAS brochures at the Sydney Home Show 2016.
- Attending a consultative forum run by NCAT to discuss home building issues.

Case study – Vulnerable client

Mikal, who has language difficulties, approached us to help draft a chronology of events, points of claim and an application to the NCAT. A HoBAS solicitor assisted Mikal, and also helped him draft terms of settlement for discussion at the conciliation conference.

Mikal had a very good outcome at conciliation. He entered into a consent order where the builder agreed to do the rectification work as per our client's expert report. He was also able to get the builder to agree to pay for the cost of his expert report. This was paid on a monthly basis and fully settled within six months.

* The names in this case study have been altered.

10. PARRAMATTA COMMUNITY JUSTICE CLINIC

The Parramatta Community Justice Clinic (PCJC) is located at Parramatta Local Court. We give legal advice to residents who cannot afford a solicitor, and provide a vital outreach to vulnerable clients who have court matters and need help across a range of legal areas including neighbourhood disputes, debt matters and traffic offences. We also receive referrals from local agencies including the Police and the Local Court registry. We provide a clinical legal program in collaboration with Western Sydney University, whose law students work side-by-side with practising solicitors. The students gain valuable experience helping vulnerable people, while fulfilling the University's mission of social justice and equality.



PCJC solicitor Jayd Raffoul

During the year, we made a number of major changes to our service delivery, which affected how clients receive advice. Perhaps the main change was that students now work on client matters with supervision from the PCJC solicitor. This makes the program more interesting for students. In total, 173 WSU law students undertook community legal practice. Looking ahead, we aim to continue improving the student program to ensure students stay engaged and stimulated, while also improving our service delivery. We will also continue to increase community awareness of our service.

Work during the year also included:

- Conducting a presentation on elder law, and an information session on domestic violence.

- Undertaking continuing legal education to stay abreast of changes in the law, and to increase our areas of expertise and enhance the service experience.
- Distributing brochures to local police stations to seek client referrals.
- Developing and delivering a resource manual and training session for volunteers on our front desk to improve service and communication with the PCJC/ Student Legal Services solicitors.

Case study– transport offence

Our client, Jim, is an Aboriginal man who receives the disability support pension. He was travelling from Melbourne to Campbelltown station around the time Opal cards were introduced. Jim believed paper tickets were no longer valid and that he was obliged to purchase an Opal card. After approaching some nearby police officers to find where he could obtain an Opal card, he was fined and charged with travelling on the train without a valid ticket. Jim approached the PCJC with a pending court date. We helped Jim prepare for court and to write submissions. He was successful in obtaining a Section 10 dismissal and was very happy with the outcome.

* The names in the case study have been altered.

11. STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES

Student Legal Services is a partnership program with Western Sydney University (WSU), funded by the WSU Student Services and Amenities Fee. We provide WSU students with legal assistance on matters such as motor accidents, tenancy, credit and debt, employment, consumer rights and traffic offences. This is a vital service as young people can easily find themselves with legal problems. We also provide advice on internal university issues such as campus parking, WSU Village disputes and plagiarism. In addition, we deliver a practical legal education program – the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic – for WSU students.

At the start of the year, our goals were to increase awareness of our program and partner with other university services to provide a more holistic service for our clients. We certainly achieved these goals. We were also pleased to improve the learning experience of law students while ensuring a high quality service to clients. We achieved this by giving students real tasks, like taking instructions and performing research, and then using qualified solicitors to advise clients. This system is working extremely well, and providing a safe environment for student lawyers to gain expertise.

Work during the year also included:

- Participating in the Western Sydney Homeless Connect Event.
- Publishing articles for *W'SUP* – WSU's student newspaper.
- Attending the WSU Student Fair at Campbelltown, Bankstown, Hawkesbury, Kingswood, Parramatta and Penrith.
- Meeting with WSU to discuss outreach and holding a fortnightly outreach at the Campbelltown and Bankstown campuses.



SLS solicitor Susannah Coles

- Attending the WSU International Students Workshop, which had a tenancy law theme.
- Participating in community education sessions for international students.

Case study – Licence suspension

A student, Adam, was fined for not displaying his P plates while driving. The demerit points incurred for this offence meant he had his licence suspended. Adam required his licence to complete his university degree, as he needed to travel to different locations to complete components of his program. Student Legal Services helped him draft submissions challenging the licence suspension. The submissions focused on him being of good character and the reasons why he needed his licence. Adam was successful in contesting the suspension and was able to keep his licence.

*The names in this case study have been altered.

12. WESTERN SYDNEY TENANTS' SERVICE

The Western Sydney Tenants' Service (WESTS) is funded by NSW Fair Trading. WESTS provides telephone advice and advocacy for tenants in dispute with their landlords or social/community housing providers, as well as residents of residential parks in dispute with the park operator. We also provide advocates at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal who can provide advice to tenants in conciliation; our presence often facilitates a safer, more productive environment for all concerned. WESTS also conducts information sessions to inform tenants of their rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act and Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act.



The WESTS team

WESTS had a very busy year. We provided assistance to 3,052 clients and 5,512 advices. We also administered training and community education sessions, and continued to build and maintain community agency relationships. Additionally, we were kept busy with database requirements and legislative changes. Through it all, the team continued to deliver a quality service for our clients.

Work during the year also included:

- Attending the Penrith and Parramatta Civil and Administrative Tribunals, where we provided tenancy advice and advocacy to vulnerable and disadvantaged community members—possibly at risk of homelessness or

compensation claims— and made referrals to emergency relief agencies and financial counsellors.

- Promoting community legal education sessions at many events and locations, including Macquarie Community College, Auburn Welcomes You, and Mt Druitt Ethnic Community Agency.
- Holding information sessions at many residential parks, such as Nepean River Holiday Park, Wallacia Caravan Park, and OK Caravan Park.
- Providing information sessions with social housing providers, Civil and Administrative Tribunals and the Police to increase awareness of social issues and advocate for change.

Case study – illegal lockout

Paula was illegally locked out by her social housing provider and was living in a car. She is 17 years old and is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) person. She is disadvantaged, having left home, and dropped out of school. The social housing provider induced Paula into signing over her tenancy even though she is semi-literate. WESTS helped Paula get her tenancy reinstated at the tribunal, and set up a repayment plan for rental arrears. Paula has since maintained a successful tenancy with no rental arrears.

*The names in this case study have been altered.

13. CENTRAL WEST CONTACT SERVICE



(Left to right) Leanne Hart, Department of Social Services, Leah Cruikshank and Nawal Wehbe of Central West Contact Service

Central West Contact Service (CWCS) acts as a bridge between parents whose relationship has broken down and reached a point where civil communications and compromises are challenging to achieve. We help parents by arranging times for the child/children to spend time with their non-residential parent at our centre, foster relationships between parents and their children, and enable parents to transition to unsupervised contact. Our work is part of a proactive solution to addressing social issues that may otherwise impact young people when their parents find it impossible to co-parent in a healthy way after they separate. Our clients come to us mainly through orders issued by the Family Court, and formal parental agreements.

Our work is always challenging, as we are working with families in crisis. However, this year was harder than most due to high staff turnover, which then required us to spend more time on staff induction and training. Despite this, we maintained an extremely high level of service.

This was reflected in our client satisfaction survey, which found that clients are satisfied with our service, especially 'spend time with' parents, who are grateful for the provision of a safe place to spend time with their children.

Work during the year also included:

- Presenting a training session at the Family Court on mediating with Aboriginal clients; and at a conference on 'Family Violence and Trauma – The Impact on Families'.
- Providing support to families experiencing high levels of anxiety when attending the centre to facilitate their court orders.
- Providing referrals to clients, such as counselling and parenting programs.

Case study – 'spend time with' parent

A separated couple, Ben and Sarina, contacted the centre after court orders were issued for Ben to spend time with their two-year-old son. The couple separated not long after their son was born, and both parents made allegations of domestic violence against each other. Sarina was anxious about Ben spending time with their son, but our staff reassured Sarina that our centre would be a safe place.

During the first few contacts, our staff provided support to Ben and his son, which helped them settle into a routine. Ben also attended the Parenting after Separation program, and his relationship with his son improved significantly. The family spent six months doing supervised contact at the centre, and on their next court appearance the magistrate said they were ready to progress from supervised contact to supervised changeover / change back contact. Both parents expressed their sincere thanks and stated that CWCS had rebuilt their confidence in each other and fostered a healthy father-son relationship.

*The names in this case study have been altered.

14. CHILDRENS COURT ASSISTANCE SCHEME



Coordinator of the Scheme Stan Small

The main role of the Children's Court Assistance Scheme (CCAS) is to help clients while they are at court – for example, by helping them fill in forms. While clients wait for their matter to be dealt with by the court, we can help them find a place to live if they are homeless or 'couch surfing', get them counselling or mediation if they have problems at home, and find the right service if they have an alcohol or drug problem. If clients need support, they can ask the CCAS worker to come into court with them. We also provide information to young people and their families, talk to them about the issues at court and help them de-stress.

This year marked the 20th anniversary of the CCAS. During this time, we have provided an invaluable service to thousands of young people and their families who are caught up in the legal process, and we have been privileged to offer support at a time when young people can be very vulnerable.

On a sad note, we bid farewell to Sue Underwood, our long-time CCAS worker at Bidura Children's Court, who was awarded the Youth Worker of the Year Award by Youth Action. We were fortunate to replace Sue with Jeff Hockey, who is well known to the young people and services in the Bidura catchment.

We also lost Carolina Saez, our worker at Parramatta Children's Court. We were fortunate to replace her with Jessica Brown, who has substantial expertise and a passion for the rights and needs of young people. She is an Aboriginal woman who has been assisting with casework through the Youth Koori Court at Parramatta Children's Court.

Work during the year also included:

- Following up on the needs of young people appearing at court – such as transport to appointments with Juvenile Justice, and help with purchasing household goods, food and clothing.
- Attending network meetings for youth workers across Sydney, including Youth Justice Coalition and the Inner West Youth Network; and Mt Druitt and Blacktown Youth Workers Network.
- Educating law students through the Parramatta Community Justice Clinic.
- Participating in the Youth Koori Court.
- Developing partnerships with stakeholders such as Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Service, Juvenile Justice, and Police.

Case study – Home assistance

Jaidyn is a 16-year-old Aboriginal person who was referred to Youth Koori Court due to three charges, including Aggravated Break and Enter. He was living out of a car with his mother. Jaidyn has a hearing impairment and a moderate intellectual disability. We were asked by the Aboriginal Legal Service to help Jaidyn find a home and contribute to his Youth Koori Court plan.

We were able to bring together the funding from a range of sources, thanks largely to our strong reputation with community organisations, including brokerage services. Jaidyn and his family moved into their rental property four days after court. We also helped furnish their home and helped Jaidyn complete the set tasks on his Youth Koori Court plan. He and his mother were grateful for the assistance we provided.

*The names in this case study have been altered.

15. WOMENS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVOCACY SERVICE



(Left to right) Team members Jessica Bratina, Oloa Savaiinaea and Lisa Kastropil

The Parramatta Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) is funded by Legal Aid through the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program (WDVCAP). Our service covers four Police local area commands: Rosehill, Ryde, Parramatta and Castle Hill. We provide clients face-to-face support and assistance throughout the Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) mention. Clients can also access the Legal Aid domestic violence prosecutor's service and seek legal advice.

It has been an exciting year for the WDVCAS. Parramatta was chosen to be one of first six sites for the rollout of the 'It Stops Here: Safer Pathways' program and began running the Local Coordination Point for the Parramatta Local Area Command. In addition, we continued to be involved in community events and provided educational presentations about domestic violence to the community. This year, we also began receiving daily referrals via an electronic platform issued by Victim Services NSW. The new system saw our workload immediately increase by 78%.

Work during the year also included:

- Attending the weekly ADVO list day at Parramatta Local Court, Children's Court and at Burwood Court.
- Running a monthly domestic violence prosecutors' clinic, with the NSW Police Prosecutors, to prepare clients for upcoming ADVO hearings.
- Attending Safety Action Meetings for clients referred by NSW Police, government and non-government agencies who are at risk of serious injury or death. These meetings assist and protect victims of intimate partner domestic violence.
- Attending Safety Action Meeting Refresher Training, and participating in domestic violence community network meetings.

Case study – Domestic violence

Kim is a 46-year-old woman from Vietnam. In 2012, she separated from Andrew, her partner of 12 years, after he sexually assaulted her. Kim and Andrew have two young sons. Family Court Orders granted full custody of the children to Kim. Andrew was charged with the sexual assault, indecent assault and common assault and had an ADVO placed on him. Andrew breached the ADVO, and Kim was extremely anxious he would continue to do so.

She was referred to Macquarie Legal Centre and Women's Legal Services for legal advice. After a Safety Action Meeting and Safety Action Planning, we were able to lessen the serious threats to Kim and her children. At her home, the locks were changed, surveillance cameras installed, and fences extended. Police also pursued breach of charges. Kim has now reported she feels less vulnerable.

*The names in this case study have been altered.

16. YOUTH EDUCATION PROJECT (YEP)

The Youth Education Project (YEP) provides legal education, training and resources to young people and those who work with young people within the Auburn, Holroyd and Parramatta local government areas. The YEP aims to educate young people about the law and legal issues that affect them through interactive training sessions and workshops.

During the year, we successfully applied for funding from City of Parramatta Council for a pilot project we call the YouthTube Project. The project will deliver accessible and relevant information and education to young people via digital technology, such as a website, YouTube and social media. The project is being run in partnership with the council, with support from Youth Action (the peak advocacy organization for young people), and Artists & Rebels (a content agency with a focus on social media).

Work during the year also included:

- Holding community legal education sessions for young people through Evolve Housing for Youth and Parramatta Mission.
- Continuing to promote and deliver the Think Before You Act educational package.
- Attending a training workshop run by the Parramatta Holroyd Youth Action Team on young people and homelessness.
- Meeting with Youth Action and young people to determine issues for the YouthTube Project.
- Meeting with Youth Justice Coalition, Auburn Youth Interagency, CLCNSW, Family and Community Services, Auburn Community Sector Network and Parramatta Holroyd Youth Action.
- Attending the What's Up West conference organised by Youth Action.



YEP Coordinator Anne Gillian

17. KEY STATISTICS

Generalist Legal Practice

- Number of advices= 1313
- Cases opened= 149
- Cases closed= 167
- Legal information and referrals given= 727

Home Building Advocacy Service

- Number of advices= 879
- Cases opened= 15
- Cases closed= 23
- 49.4% of clients were born outside Australia
- 11.7% of clients had a disability



The MLC team



Family Relationship Centre Legal Services

- Number of advices = 253
- Cases closed = 45
- Cases opened = 33
- 43.6% of clients were born outside Australia

Western Sydney Tenants Service

- Cases opened = 1693
- Cases closed = 1411
- 19.5% of clients had a disability

Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service

- Clients assisted = 1195
- 47.5% of clients were from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background
- 11.1% had a disability

Children's Court Advocacy Service

- Young people assisted = 4389 (22.6% of Aboriginal descent)
- Other people assisted = 1992 (family, carers and friends of young people in custody)

Central West Contact Service

- Intake interviews= 94
- Supervised contacts= 668
- Changeover/back= 1190

KEY STATISTICS (CONT)

Parramatta Community Justice Clinic

- Total clients assisted = 124
- 88.7% on a low income
- 61.3% born outside Australia
- 15.3% had a disability



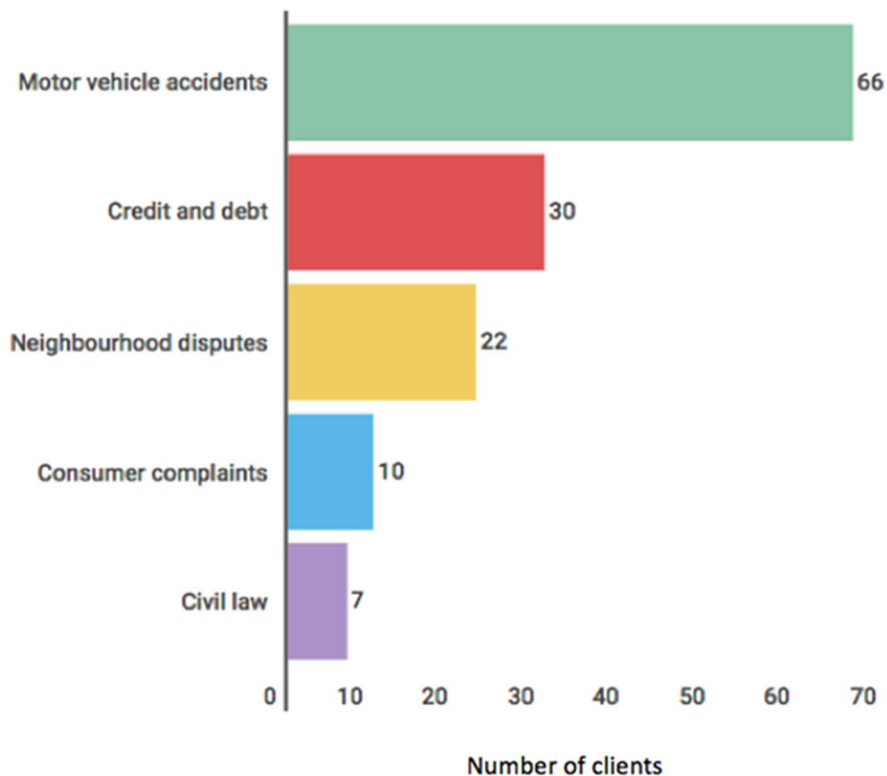
Student Legal Services Western Sydney University

- Number of advices= 124
- Cases opened = 8
- Cases closed = 7

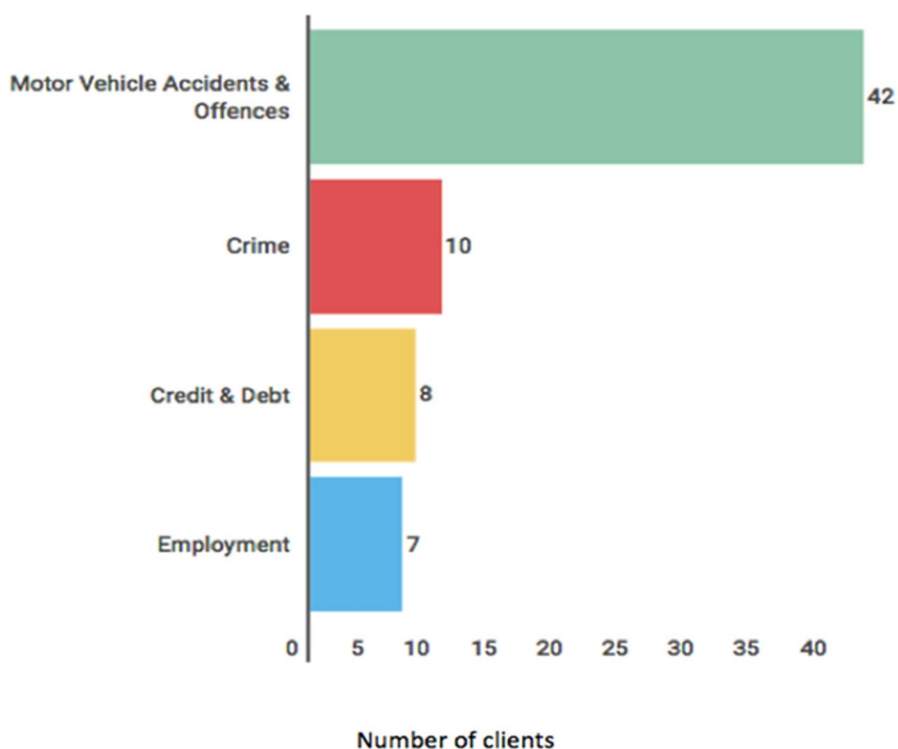


PCJC solicitor Jayd Raffoul (left) and
SLS solicitor Susannah Coles (right)

Top 5 matter types



Primary Matter Types



18. CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"I am very grateful to you, Samiha and team, for assisting me with the divorce. I sincerely appreciate Samiha and team's efforts and unfailing attention to detail. My heart is at peace now as I am no more in that abusive relationship. I express heartfelt thanks for all you all have done."

- Client of FRC

"I am sending you this email to express my pleasure and gratitude for working with Mrs Sarah Hart on my family law case. I can never thank her enough for the great work she has done and she is still doing. In addition to being a knowledgeable lawyer, Mrs Hart is an excellent and compassionate community worker."

- Client of FRC

"Parramatta Community Justice Clinic has been my only lifeline all these time. The staff there are very nice and they have been helping me with things from giving me advise to teaching me how to fill in all the documents etc. Without this clinic, I am sure many people including myself will have nowhere to go for such help. So, a big thankyou to Parramatta Community Justice Clinic from the bottom of my heart!"

- Client of PCJC

"Your participation and positive impact on our international students is greatly appreciated."

- Western Sydney University staff

"You guys are great. Without you I don't know where I would have got help from."

- Client of CCAS

"Thanks for all the help you've given me with a place to live, a fridge and food."

- Client of CCAS

"Parramatta WDVCS assisted me during my mini ADVO Hearing. Thank you Charo for ensuring I was emotionally capable of being able to stand up in the court room."

- Client of WDVCS

"Jess has assisted me in more ways than just court support after years of DV, I've been assisted with FaCS, Housing and Health."

- Client of WDVCS

"The centre helped facilitate a smooth transition for change overs. It acted as a safe space between both parents that allowed us to work through the initial problems and conflict."

- Client of CWCS

"You really helped me so much. I really appreciated it from my heart."

- Client of HoBAS

19. STAFF

Justin ABI DAHER
Paula ABRAM*
Samiha ALAMEDDINE
Roya ARAN
Tamara BAILEY
Sabna BALAKRISHNAN
Katherine BOYLE
Jessica BRATINA
Jessica BROWN
Wendy CHANDRAN
Kevin CHIV
Lita CHIV
Thelma CLOSE
Susannah COLES
Leah CRUIKSHANK
Gwen DAVIES*
Corinne DEALL
Elfet EID
Michelle ERICOLI
Raymond FINCH*

Giehan GERGIS
Hannah-Joy GILLARD
Anne GILLIAN
Maria GIRDLER
Samantha GORDON
Sarah HART
Aimee HINDER
Victor HOANG
Jeffrey HOCKEY
Tracey HOLLYWOOD
Jimmy HUANG*
Tanvi JOSHI
Lisa KASTROPIL*
Fiona KOUTSOUKIS
Mark LEE
Anastasia MAGAR
Clare MANGIOKAS
Ozra MESHKAT
Alexandra MOORE
Michelle MOORE*

Lauren NEWCOMBE
Jimmy NWEKE
Hiranya PERERA
Mary-Ann PHAM
Jayd RAFFOUL
Franya REPOLUSK
Charo ROMERO
Oloa SAVAIINAEA
Clemance SEMAAN
Rohan SHUKLA
Stan SMALL
Elodie SOMERVILLE
Osly TANG
Timothy TANYOUS
Helen TARANTO
Stacey TOOMEY
Vanita VEKARIA
Nawal WEHBE
Lee-Anne WILSON
Marianna ZAUNDERS

*Staff member left during the year



Macquarie Legal Centre staff

20. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



Chartered Accountant

ABN 65 143 005 967

MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC.

ABN 81 963 193 626

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC.**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Macquarie Legal Centre Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016, and the statement of comprehensive income and statement of changes in equity for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the governing committee's declaration.

Responsibility of Those charged With Governance

The governing committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW)* and financial reporting needs of the members.

The governing committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the governing committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by those charged with governance, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.

Tel: (02) 4736 3868 Fax: (02) 4736 3868	All correspondence to PO Box 606 Kingswood NSW 2747 Email: rob@superfundauditing.com.au Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation	Website: www.superfundauditing.com.au
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Chartered Accountant

ABN 65 143 005 967

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Macquarie Legal Centre Inc. as at 30 June 2016, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report and the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW)*.

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 in the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Macquarie Legal Centre Inc. to meet the requirements of *Associations Incorporations Act 2009 (NSW)* and the financial reporting needs of the members as determined by the governing committee. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Auditor's Qualifications

Registered Company Auditor and member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia. Registered Company Auditor No. 1632.

Association's Financial Records

The Association has kept such financial records as are necessary to enable the financial statements to be prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Tesoriero".

Robert G. Tesoriero FCA
Director

11-10-16
Date

Tel: (02) 4736 3868

Fax: (02) 4736 3868

All correspondence to
PO Box 606
Kingswood NSW 2747

Email: rob@superfundauditing.com.au

Website: www.superfundauditing.com.au

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MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC.

ABN 81 963 193 626


STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as at 30 June 2016

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Macquarie Legal Centre Inc. as at 30 June 2016 and performance for the year then ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Macquarie Legal Centre Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with the resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:

Chairperson: 

Committee Member: 

Dated this 31 day of October, 2016

Macquarie Legal Centre Inc

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended
30 June 2016

Contents

Statement by Management Committee

Auditor Report

Consolidated Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet

Individual Grant Profit & Loss Statements

MLC	Macquarie Legal Centre
DVCAS	Macquarie Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services
LCP	Local Coordination Point
C & P	Care Partner
YEP	Youth Education Project
CWCS	Central West Contact Service
CCAS	Children's Court Assistance Scheme
HoBas	Home Building Advocacy Service
TAAP	Tenants Advice Advocacy Program
PCJC	Parramatta Community Justice Clinic
SLS	Student Legal Services
Event UWS	Event Coordinator
CCOF	Children Contact One Off

MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT)

STATEMENT BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE INC

In the opinion of the members of the Management Committee

- (a) The accompanying Income & Expenditure Statements of:

MLC	Macquarie Legal Centre
DVCAS	Macquarie Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services
LCP	Local Coordination Point
C & P	Care Partner
YEP	Youth Education Project
CWCS	Central West Contact Service
CCAS	Children's Court Assistance Scheme
HoBas	Home Building Advocacy Service
TAAP	Tenants Advice Advocacy Program
PCJC	Parramatta Community Justice Clinic
SLS	Student Legal Services
Event UWS	Event Coordinator
CCOF	Children Contact One off

are drawn up so as to give a fair and true view of the results of the financial year ended June 30, 2016 and the state of affairs as of that date.

- (b) The accompanying balance sheet is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Centre as at June 30, 2016
- (c) At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the organisation will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

The Centre has, during the financial year:

- i) Kept such accounting records as correctly explain the transactions and financial position of the Centre;
- ii) Kept its accounting records in such a manner as would enable true and fair accounts of the organisation to be prepared from time to time: and
- iii) Kept its records in such a manner as would enable the accounts of the Centre to be conveniently and properly audited in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards;


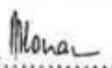
The Accounts for the Centre have been properly prepared by a competent person.

MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT)

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the committee.
Place: Parramatta, NSW

Date: 2nd November 16 Date: 26 October 2016

Member: Paula Hegwillen Member: Dabha Bonan

Signature:  Signature: 

Committee Position: Chair Committee Position: Member

Profit & Loss Statement

July 2015 through June 2016

INCOME

Operating Grants		
LAC State Grant	\$312,498.59	
FLLAD Commonwealth Grant	\$463,241.09	
Care Partner	\$38,000.04	
Home Building Advocacy Service	\$261,084.66	
Family and Community Services	\$49,429.98	
Student Legal Services WSU	\$114,999.96	
Tenants Advocacy Program	\$708,123.50	
Children Contact One Off	\$26,000.00	
LAC MDVCAP	\$346,616.81	
Local Coordination Point	\$131,492.33	
Central West Contact	\$318,798.46	
Event Coordinator WSU	\$14,906.07	
Parramatta Community	\$84,173.04	
LAC - CCAS	\$227,660.46	
Clinical -Macquarie University	\$22,000.00	
Refund Practising Certificate	\$1,361.75	
Admin Efficiencies Grants	\$23,218.00	
Total Operating Grants		\$3,143,604.74
Bank Interest		\$13,752.20
Membership Fees Rec'd		\$400.00
Sale of Equipment		\$2,037.20
Sale of Publications		\$1,012.40
Miscellaneous Income		\$5,402.33
Admin and management costs		
Management fee	\$116,112.00	
C'bution to operating	\$336,124.00	
Total Admin and management costs		\$452,236.00
CWCS Income		
Subpoenas	\$3,510.00	
Admin fees	\$880.00	
Service fees	\$105,430.55	
Total CWCS Income		\$109,820.55
Total INCOME		\$3,728,265.42

EXPENDITURE

Wages and Oncosts		
Direct Salaries	\$2,043,405.95	
Allowances	\$3,324.58	
Casuals	\$295,859.19	
Relief Staff	\$103,901.52	
Superannuation	\$233,576.06	
Leave Loading	\$34,555.25	
Workers Comp Insurance	\$9,479.76	
Training	\$14,619.91	
Travel	\$14,576.53	
Conferences	\$10,481.65	
Provisions - Annual Leave	-\$7,797.76	
Provisions - Long Service	-\$5,235.00	
Total Wages and Oncosts		\$2,750,747.64
Operating Costs		
Consultancy - supervision	\$18,158.96	

Profit & Loss Statement
July 2015 through June 2016

Contribution to operating costs	\$336,124.00	
Macquarie University	\$16,500.00	
Advertising/Promotions	\$10,733.27	
Annual Report/Service Eval'n	\$2,036.95	
Bank Charges	\$2,933.43	
Consumables	\$9,464.70	
Electricity / Gas	\$9,401.43	
Insurance	\$5,976.25	
Library & Resources	\$5,903.05	
Management Committee	\$465.93	
Memberships/Subscriptions	\$14,110.42	
P'copier/computer maintenance	\$10,364.60	
Postage/Couriers	\$5,520.95	
Rent and rates	\$165,075.17	
Cleaning Services	\$46,788.18	
Repairs & Maintenance	\$9,795.68	
Security / Alarm System	\$1,128.00	
Stationery & Printing	\$14,232.24	
Telephone/fax/internet	\$52,221.00	
Total Operating Costs		\$736,934.21
Other Costs		
Evening Advice Expenses	\$2,101.61	
Audit Fees	\$14,571.00	
Depreciation	\$77,418.50	
Furniture and Equipment	\$139.83	
Admin Efficiencies	\$25,719.80	
Disbursements	\$625.37	
Management fee	\$116,112.00	
Practising Certificates	\$2,020.87	
CCAS 10th Anniversary	\$4,349.51	
Translations - Interpreters	\$1,401.65	
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$4,109.24	
Total Other Costs		\$248,569.38
Total EXPENDITURE		\$3,736,251.23
Operating Profit		<u>-\$7,985.81</u>
OTHER INCOME		
Net Profit/(Loss)		<u><u>-\$7,985.81</u></u>

MACQUARIE LEGAL CENTRE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT)

Balance Sheet

As of June 2016

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash At Bank

Cheque Account	\$69,180.05
Business Payments Card	\$2,993.22
EFTPOS CWCS	\$9,731.17

Total Cash At Bank \$81,904.44

Cash On Hand

Petty Cash CCAS	\$40.00
Petty Cash Float	\$200.00
Petty Cash - CWCS	\$200.00
Cash Drawer	\$3,241.83

Total Cash On Hand \$3,681.83

Investment Accounts

Colonial First State Inv MLC	\$810,077.08
National Term Deposit 4877	\$25,192.22
MLC Bank Guarantee NASUS 6970	\$25,204.64
CWCS Bank Guarantee 8580	\$12,382.22

Total Investment Accounts \$872,856.16

Total Current Assets \$958,442.43

Fixed Assets

Computer Equipment

\$6,103.36

Total Fixed Assets \$6,103.36

Total ASSETS \$964,545.79

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities

Accrued Leave Expenses

Sick Leave Accruals \$20,500.00

Annual Leave Accrual \$170,767.83

Long Service Leave Accrual \$99,918.48

Provisions for Redundancy \$9,379.39

Parenting Leave Provision \$11,037.00

Centrelink Maternity Payment \$6,706.92

Grants In Advance

PCJC-WSU \$10,675.34

Children Contact One-Off \$26,000.00

Tenancy Advocacy Services \$452,675.65

Student Legal Services - WSU \$90,000.08

Total Grants In Advance \$579,351.07

Deductions

Fringe Benefits Payable -\$1,050.00

Total Deductions -\$1,050.00

Provisions

Audit Fees Provision \$14,212.98

Equipment replacement \$15,564.00

Telephone system \$3,367.45

Total Provisions \$33,144.43

Total Current Liabilities \$929,755.12

Total LIABILITIES \$929,755.12

Net Assets

\$34,790.67

Balance Sheet

As of June 2016

EQUITY		
Current Year Surplus	-\$7,985.81	
Prior Surplus	\$42,776.48	
Total EQUITY		<u>\$34,790.67</u>



Macquarie Legal Centre
Level 3, Suite 302, 107 Phillip St
Parramatta NSW 2150

PO Box 23
Parramatta NSW 2124
T: (02) 8833 0911

www.wscl.org.au

